

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1, 5, and 19 are amended. The revisions to claims 1 and 19 are supported, for example, at original claims 22, 23, 71, and 72, and at page 20, lines 2-8 in the specification. Claims 8, 22, 23, 34, 36, 38, and 69-72 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Claims 1-7, 9-21, 24-33, 35, 37, and 39-68 are pending, with claims 3-4, 20, 39-44, and 53-58 being withdrawn from consideration. Applicants request that the non-elected claims be maintained and reinstated if amended to track allowed subject matter of the elected claims.

Initially, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the indication that the application contains allowable subject matter, and that claims 23 and 72 are allowable.

Claim objections

Claims 5 and 34 were objected to because of minor informalities. Applicants have editorially amended claim 5 as suggested by the Examiner. Claim 34 has been canceled.

Claim rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 8, 34, 36, 38, 69-70 stand rejected as being indefinite. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection; however, Applicants have canceled those claims, rendering the rejection moot.

Claim rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12-14, 17, 19, 31, 45, 46, 51, 52, 61, 62, 64, 69, and 70 stand rejected as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,275,363 (Gill '363) in view of Applied Physics Letters, Volume 74, #24, June 14, 1999, pp. 3690-92 (Moon). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the features of claim 72, including the features of the intervening claims. As noted above, the Examiner has indicated that claim 72 is allowable.

Independent claim 19 has been amended to include the features of claim 23, including the features of the intervening claims. As noted above, the Examiner has indicated that claim 23 is allowable.

Claims 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12-14, 17, 19, 31, 45, 46, 51, 52, 61, 62, 64, 69, and 70 depend from claims 1 and 19, and are believed allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 10-12, 15-17, 19, 31, 34, 45, 46, 51, 52, 61, 62, 64, 69, and 70 stand rejected as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,271,997 (Gill '997) in view of Moon. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claims 1 and 19 are believed allowable for the reasons noted above. Claims 2, 5, 7, 10-12, 15-17, 31, 34, 45, 46, 51, 52, 61, 62, 64, 69, and 70 depend from claims 1 and 19 and are believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claims 1, 19, 22, and 71 stand rejected as being obvious over Journal of Magnetism and Magnetic Materials 210, 2000 L20-24 (Sakakima) in view of Moon. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection; however, claims 22 and 71 have been canceled, rendering this rejection moot.

Independent claims 1 and 19 are believed allowable for the reasons noted above. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claims 19 and 22 stand rejected as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,407,890 (Gill '890) in view of Moon. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection; however, claim 22 has been canceled, rendering this rejection moot.

Independent claim 19 is believed allowable for the reasons noted above. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claims 6 and 63 stand rejected as being obvious over either Gill '997 or Gill '363 in view of Moon, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,408,377 (Gurney). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 1 is believed allowable for the reasons noted above. Claims 6 and 63 depend from claim 1 and are believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claim 9 stands rejected as being obvious over Gill '363 in view of Moon, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,329,078 (Tsuge). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 1 is believed allowable for the reasons noted above. Claim 9 depends from claim 1 and is believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claims 18, 21, 59, and 60 stand rejected as being obvious over Gill '997 in view of Moon, and further in view of Journal of Applied Physics, Vol. 85, #8, pp. 5828-5833 (Parkin).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claims 1 and 19 are believed allowable for the reasons noted above.

Claims 18, 21, 59, and 60 depend from claims 1 and 19, and are believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claims 24-26, 28, 29, and 35-38 stand rejected as being obvious over Gill '363 in view of Moon, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,313,973 (Fuke). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection; however, claims 36 and 38 have been canceled, rendering the rejection of those claims moot.

Independent claims 1 and 19 are believed allowable for the reasons noted above.

Claims 24-26, 28, 29, 35, and 37 depend from claims 1 and 19, and are believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claim 27 stands rejected as being obvious over Gill '363 in view of Moon, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,648,885 (Nishioka). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 19 is believed allowable for the reasons noted above. Claim 27 depends from claim 19, and is believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claims 29 and 30 stand rejected as being obvious over Gill '363 in view of Moon, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,046,892 (Aoshima). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 19 is believed allowable for the reasons noted above. Claims 29 and 30 depend from claim 19, and are believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claim 32 stands rejected as being obvious over Gill '363 in view of Moon, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,108,177 (Gill '177). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 19 is believed allowable for the reasons noted above. Claim 32 depends from claim 19, and is believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claim 33 stands rejected as being obvious over Gill '363 in view of Moon, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,133,732 (Hayashi). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 19 is believed allowable for the reasons noted above. Claim 33 depends from claim 19, and is believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claims 47-50 stand rejected as being obvious over Gill '363 in view of Moon, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,901,018 (Fontana). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claims 1 and 19 are believed allowable for the reasons noted above. Claims 47-50 depend from claims 1 and 19, and are believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

Claims 1, 19, and 65-68 stand rejected as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,639,764 (Saito) in view of Moon, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,949,622 (Kamiguchi). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

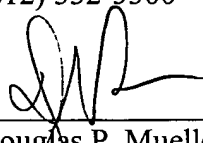
Independent claims 1 and 19 are believed allowable for the reasons noted above. Claims 65-68 depend from claims 1 and 19, and are believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300

Date: February 9, 2004



Douglas P. Mueller
Reg. No. 30,300
DPM:DTL